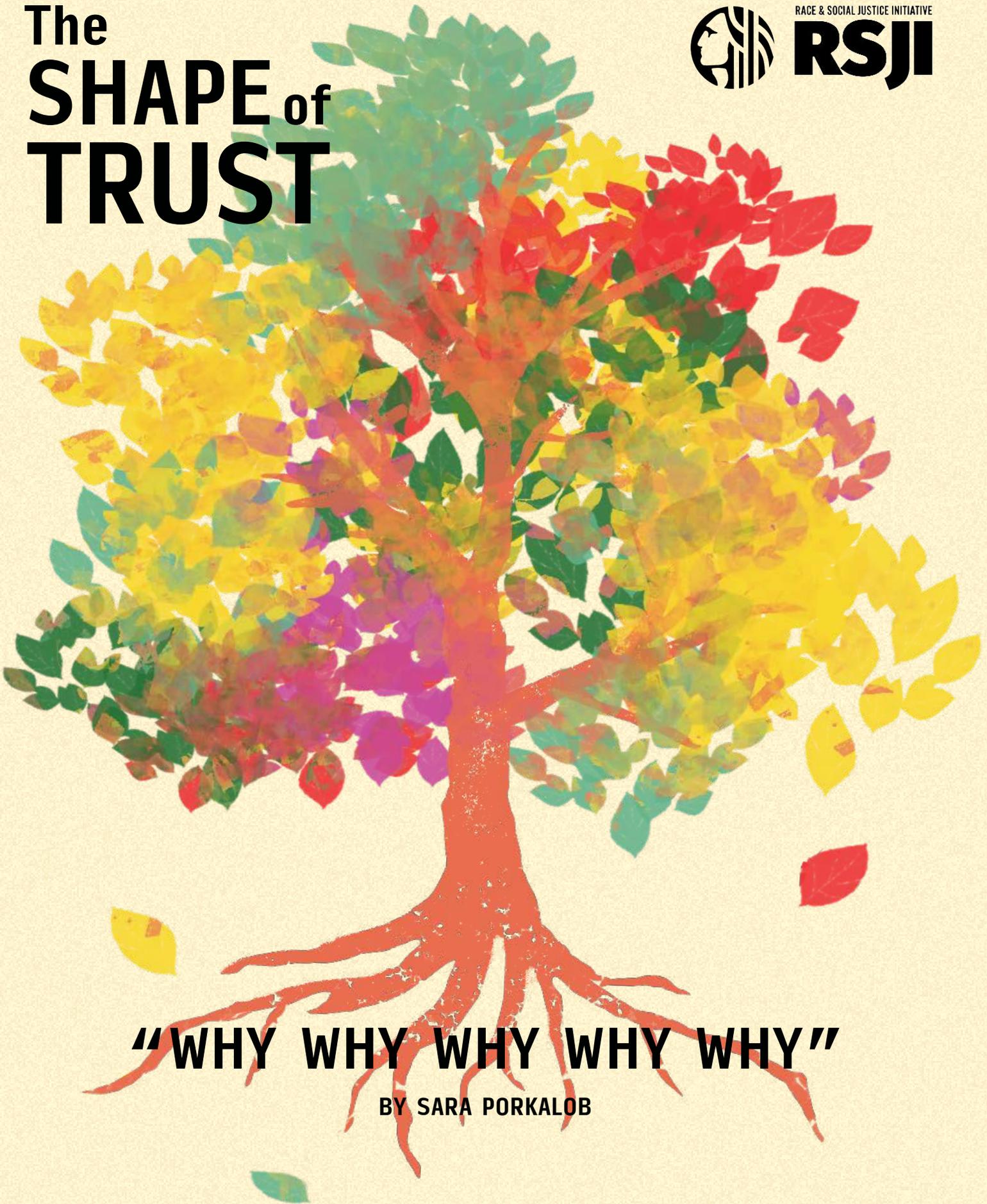


# The **SHAPE** of **TRUST**



RACE & SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE

**RSJI**



**“WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY”**

BY SARA PORKALOB



# WHAT

An immersive storytelling exercise that helps people get to the root understanding of something they experience. This can be done individually or in pairs. This activity can be adapted for live, virtual learning.

## Number of Participants

**6-70.** This activity works well in groups of all sizes and will require more time for larger groups. When done in pairs, it requires an even number of participants.

## Time

**20 minutes minimum.** Timing for each step is flexible, based on the needs of the group and overall facilitation plan. Some suggestions are provided. Total time will depend on format (in-person, virtual, or hybrid), number of participants, and other factors such as where you want to focus learning and for how long. We expect that experienced facilitators will know how to adjust and limit time as needed.

This Activity Spotlight is a component of The Shape of Trust Video Facilitation Guide by the City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI). For information on the facilitation experience recommended for those using the Guide, a glossary of terms, and tips to support collective health, wellbeing, and belonging – in particular of BIPOC – please download the Guide from the RSJI website.

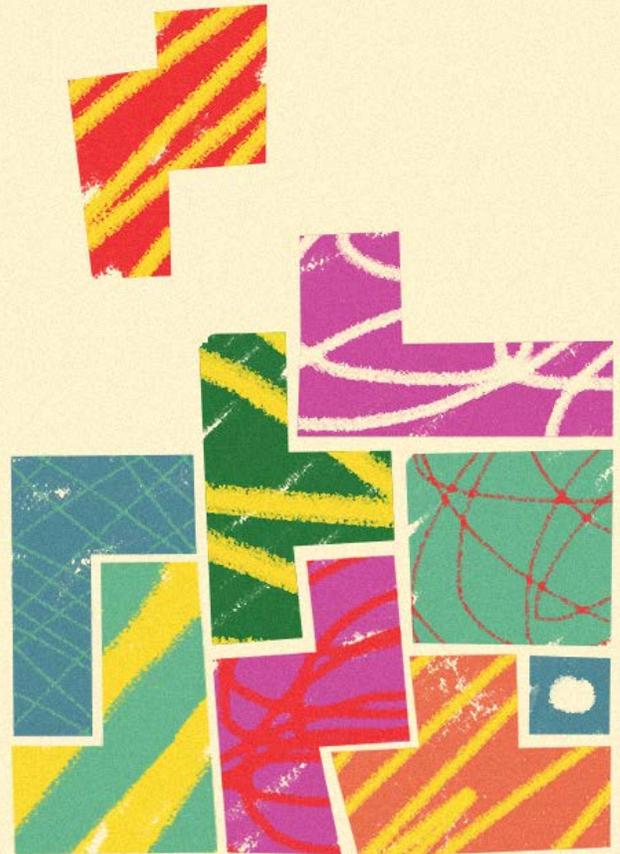
# LEARNING OBJECTIVE

## Participants will:

Sift through their unique lived experience to find stories to share with others.

Explore the connections between something they want and the underlying reasons compelling them to want it.

Practice active listening while holding space for other people's stories.



# Participant Preparation

If you are facilitating online, ask participants to come to the session with blank paper and drawing implements such as pens, markers, or pencils.

## Facilitation Materials

- Participants will need paper and a pencil/pen, or a device to write on.
- The Shape of Trust Video Facilitation Guide, "Glossary".

**Barry Johnson**, Untitled 11, 2017, House paint, wood, roofing material and skewer sticks, 48" x 46"

Seattle Public Utilities 1% for Art  
Portable Works Collection



# HOW IT WORKS

## ENVISION / WRITE (15 min)

Ask participants to silently think of something that they deeply want, and that they can articulate in one sentence. For example, "I want more sleep", "I want to make more money", "I want to feel safe in my neighborhood", or "I want to help eliminate anti-Blackness and anti-Indigeneity in my workplace".

At the top of your page, write down the thing you were thinking of. Start your sentence with "I want...".

Below your sentence, write down "Why" 5 times in a column on the left side of your paper or device. Leave enough room between the "Why's" so you have space to write.

Answer each "Why". The only rules: you are not allowed to have the same answer twice and you can answer "I don't know" only once.

## Example

I want more sleep

Why	Because I am tired all the time
Why	Because I work 12 hours a day
Why	Because I have to work that many hours in order to pay my bills and pay for my life.
Why	Because I only get paid minimum wage and that isn't enough to support me and my family with one job.
Why	Because the government doesn't believe that minimum wage should be a living wage.

Encourage participants to give themselves ample time to reflect on each "Why". The above example had short answers, but lists don't have to follow that format. Notice how each "Why" builds

on the answer before it rather than being a different version of the first answer. This exercise is an invitation for participants to get to the root of their want.

## REFLECT (5 min)

Facilitate a group sharing of responses to these questions:

- What was that like? How did that feel?
- What was difficult?
- What was surprising?
- Compare your "I want" sentence to your answer for Why #5. What do you notice?
- How do you feel about your "I want" sentence now that you've gotten deeper into the "why" of it?